



United States Air Force

ONLINE news

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NEWSBYTES

SRB max increases

The maximum allowable selective reenlistment bonus authorized has increased from \$45,000 to \$60,000. The change became effective Feb. 4.

Eligibility for the higher bonus cap requires reenlistment on or after this date. Retroactive payments for reenlistments that occurred before Feb. 4 are not authorized based on legal restrictions.

Military personnel flights have further information.

ACC gets new commander

General John P. Jumper assumed command of Air Combat Command from Gen. Ed Eberhart at Langley Air Force Base, Va., Feb. 8, becoming ACC's fifth commander. General Jumper was formerly the commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

General Eberhart will become commander in chief of U.S. Space Command, commander in chief of North American Aerospace Defense Command, commander of Air Force Space Command, and Department of Defense manager for Space Transportation Systems Contingency Support at Peterson AFB, Colo.

AFAF campaign begins

The 2000 Air Force Assistance Fund campaign begins Feb. 28 and runs through March 31. "Commitment to Caring" is the campaign's permanent theme. Last year's contributions totaled nearly \$4 million. The Air Force goal for the 2000 AFAF Campaign is \$3.4 million.

The annual AFAF campaign raises money for four charitable organizations benefiting active-duty, Reserve, Guard and retired Air Force people and their families, including surviving spouses and their families.

Unit AFAF key workers have additional information.

2001 Budget proposals

■ AF leaders outline details

**By Staff Sgt. Cynthia Miller
and
Senior Airman A.J. Bosker**
*Headquarters
United States Air Force*

WASHINGTON — In separate testimony before the House and Senate Armed Services Committees Feb. 10, the Air Force secretary and chief of staff outlined their proposed budget that focuses on people, readiness, modernization and evolution toward an expeditionary force.

"We've got to continue to press with both quality of life and quality of service," said Secretary F. Whitten Peters to members of the Senate committee. "Quality of service requires modern equipment and spare parts, but the key now is to reduce the workloads. We have to provide family stability."

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photo by Master Sgt. Val Gempis

Quality of life and quality of service are key objectives outlined in this year's AF posture statement.



VISA use a must by March 1

By Staff Sgt. Cynthia Miller
Headquarters United States Air Force

WASHINGTON — DOD policy is being finalized which will mandate federal employees, including military members, to no longer use their personal credit charge cards for authorized expenses while on official government travel.

Use of the government Visa travel card by all federal employees becomes mandatory March 1, according to revised policies dictated by the Travel and Transportation Reform Act of 1998.

"The policy has not been formally signed out but it's important to get as much information out as possible. We want to provide our people in the field with the latest information we have," said Mr. Michael Weber, card coordinator for the Air Force.

The Act created the requirement to enable the government to take advantage of rebates from charge card companies and to help track travel expenditures, Air Force officials said.

Defense Department employees will be required to use the government travel card primarily for hotel costs, car rentals and air travel.

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Letters to the editor

U.S. Air Force Online News publishes letters based on their appeal to an Air Force-wide audience each week.

Send your letter to the U.S. Air Force Online News staff by completing the online form at <http://www.af.mil/newspaper/>

Due to the number of letters, not all letters can be published. Letters may be edited for grammar and length. Only letters accompanied by a valid name and email address will be considered.

Feeling the pinch

I am on the weight management program. At the same time, I can pass any fitness test, current or future... My problem is the way we test for body fat percentage by measuring the neck and abdomen. Why not measure the leg and arm or ankle and wrist? Why not use the caliper test, better known as the pinch test? ... When it comes to a career, why not use the most accurate method?

Senior Airman Jason L. Whitman
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska

Pay hoopla

I support the comments regarding decreasing benefits ["Doing our job," Feb. 9]. For all the hoopla surrounding our pay increase, no one mentioned that our BAH decreased. ... If this is an example of how much our leadership cares for us, at this rate, we should be comatose soon.

Lt. Col. Gonzalo Vergara
McClellan AFB, Calif.

One too many

If I were still in the service, I would have some serious reservations about receiving the anthrax shot. Put the court-martials on hold, a few negative reactions is one too many. The question is "What are the long-term effects on your health?" The word anthrax is enough to scare most people, never mind the actual shot.

Kevin Burns
Retired, USAF

Budget too small

I am concerned that the DOD budget and especially the Air Force budget, remain far too small. The AF is reducing the number of C-17's being purchased to fund the C-130J. Both are needed, as is the C-5 modernization. Airlift is essential. Other examples abound, such as the budget pressures on the YAL-1 and F-22.

Tech. Sgt. Bill Brockman
Robins AFB, Ga.

Today's Air Force: 'Best of the best' Lack of stripes doesn't diminish worth

By Airman 1st Class Jennifer Andrews
60th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs
TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif.

(AMCNS) — Air Force statistics indicate the average airman coming into the Air Force is 19.9 years old. Out of those airmen, nearly 16 percent had at least 15 hours of college credit.

Last year alone, 325 new recruits started basic training with a college degree, 13 of those had a master's degree. I am part of that percentage of new recruits with a college degree that chose to serve as an enlisted person. I was surprised when I arrived here to find that some assume the lack of rank to be a lack of intelligence.

This assumption is not true. Most airmen are smart, motivated and want to make a difference. The Air Force recruits airmen saying it holds them to a higher standard and only wants the "best of the best" to serve within its ranks. Yet, once new airmen arrive at their permanent station, this recruiting concept may be lost if new airmen aren't treated as the best of the best or held to a higher standard.

Today's airmen are not carbon copies of yesterday's Air Force. We come with different perspectives and an abundance of innovative ideas. Yes, we lack military experience. Yes, some of our ideas are not

practical in a military environment. However, when energetic airmen are stifled and not given an opportunity to shine and show intelligence, the Air Force is being cheated out of a valuable resource.

Effective leaders bridge the experience gap by being mentors. When the time is taken to empower airmen, the military benefits from unexpected results.

In November, eight airmen from Travis Air Force Base, Calif., earned almost \$9,500 from the Air Force's Innovative Development through Employee Awareness program. Four members of the team were junior enlisted from the 60th Aerial Port Squadron. Their contributions helped improve the government bill of lading process for the squadron's freight management section. The innovative idea saves Travis about \$68,000 annually.

A senior airman from Eglin AFB, Fla., received the 1998 Air Force Submitter of the Year award. It is the most prestigious award associated with the IDEA program. In

1998, the Air Force accepted 14 of his 21 ideas submitted. He is credited with saving the Air Force more than \$93,762.

"
Yes, we lack military experience ... some of our ideas are not practical in a military environment. However, when energetic airmen are ... not given an opportunity ... to show intelligence, the Air Force is being cheated out of a valuable resource.

Airman 1st Class John Levitow was the lowest ranking airman in history to receive the Medal of Honor. He was a 23-year-old airman first class working as a loadmaster aboard an AC-47 during the Vietnam War when he threw himself on a magnesium flare to save the lives of the people on board.

In these cases, the airmen were held accountable for their

actions and respected for their initiative. They did not succeed all on their own, but under the guidance of their leaders.

Part of what leadership means is being passionate about motivating others to succeed and holding them accountable when they don't. NCOs and officers are required to accept the responsibility of being leaders. In turn, airmen must accept responsibility to prove themselves.



Air Force symbol explained

By Col. Ron Rand
Director of Public Affairs

Four weeks ago, U.S. Air Force ONLINE NEWS carried a story about the development and testing of a new Air Force symbol and theme. Although a final decision on the symbol is pending, the secretary and the chief of staff are aware of the keen interest throughout the force in its ultimate shape, design and meaning. They also want all members of the Air Force family to understand the motivation behind the development of a new and unifying symbol and theme to represent Air Force people and all the important things they do for our nation.

This initiative is not about changing or re-inventing the Air Force. It's about ensuring our own people and the public we serve have a clear, consistent understanding of who we are and the value we provide our nation. Because change always causes turbulence, we expect and welcome criticism and advice. To date, we've received input from all parts of the Air Force family and the general public — 10,000 people and counting!

To the right is the symbol and the explanation of what it means. We welcome your feedback — just send your input to www.af.mil/newspaper/feedback.htm.



(PENDING)

The U.S. Air Force symbol honors the heritage of our past and represents the promise of our future. It retains the core elements of our Air Corps heritage — the “Arnold” wings and star with circle — and modernizes them to reflect our aerospace force of today and tomorrow. The symbol has two main parts.

In the upper half, the stylized wings represent the stripes of our strength — the enlisted men and women of our force. They have been drawn with great angularity to emphasize our swiftness and power, and they are divided into six sections which represent our core competencies — aerospace superiority, global attack, rapid global mobility, precision engagement, information superiority, and agile combat support.

In the lower half there are a sphere, a star and three diamonds. The sphere within the star represents the globe. It reminds us of our obligation to secure our nation's freedom with Global Vigilance, Reach and Power. The globe also reminds us of our challenge as an expeditionary force to respond rapidly to crises and to provide decisive aerospace power, worldwide.

The area surrounding the sphere takes the shape of a star. The star has many meanings. Its five points represent the components of our one force and family — our active duty, civilians, Guard, Reserve and retirees. The star symbolizes space as the high ground of our nation's aerospace force. The rallying symbol in all our wars, the star also represents our officer corps, central to our combat leadership.

The star has been framed with three diamonds, which represent our core values — integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do. The elements come together to form one symbol that presents two powerful images — at once it is an eagle, the emblem of our nation, and a medal, representing valor in service to our nation.

2001 budget

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Chief of Staff Gen. Michael E. Ryan told House committee members, “This budget continues our commitment to improving pay, benefits, and quality of life. It also contains emphasis on improving recruiting and retention to ensure we are growing the force of the future.”

According to General Ryan, the Air Force has been in a constant state of high operations tempo since the end of the Cold War. “We are smaller than we have ever been, yet tasked at a level many times the Cold War pace — the stress is showing.”

“Our airmen are a national treasure,” he said. “But their jobs are not easy. The Air Force in 2000 is the smallest in history and on any given day, almost one-sixth of the total force are at forward operating locations.”

Multiple deployments, crisis responses and aging equipment are stressing manpower levels, he said.

To alleviate some of the stress placed on manpower and equipment, Secretary Peters said the Expeditionary Aerospace Force provides a rotational structure that brings stability and predictability. It was also designed to cut both deployed and at-home workloads.

To achieve these goals, the secretary has proposed greater use of Guard and Reserve units in addition to moving nearly 6,000 positions into deployed forces by the end of 2001.

In an effort to reverse the downward trends in recruiting and retention, budgetary emphasis is being placed on increasing quality of life benefits, such as pay and compensation for current Air Force members, and launching new efforts in paid advertising, and increasing the recruiter force.

“Recruiting and retaining the highest quality men and women are among our greatest challenges,” General Ryan said. “We are losing too many airmen and will probably miss our recruiting goal again this year.”

To facilitate reorganization and to save money, Secretary Peters called for another round of base realignment and closures. “We are wasting people by spreading them too thin,” he said. “We desperately need to consolidate our units, but there is no way to do that without another round of BRAC.”

This article is available in its entirety online.

Airmen can now choose from 6 frames

Military
issued
glasses
sport new
look

As a quality of life improvement and in an effort to increase use of its issued eyeglasses, the Air Force recently initiated its Frame of Choice program Air Force-wide. Under the new program, active-duty members have a choice of six different frame types when selecting military-issued eyeglasses. Previously, people had no choice. Go online to get the complete story.



'99 JEFX results approved

The Air Force has approved nearly 30 initiatives drawn from last year's Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment 1999, that sharpens the service's focus and ability to see and plan for the year 2010 battlespace and an expeditionary aerospace force.

The complete story is online.

DOD announces two overseas base closures

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen announced Feb. 15 that the Department of Defense will end operations at two overseas locations as the 25th round of base closures.

Headquarters U.S. Air Forces in Europe will cease operations at the Soesterberg Collocated Operating Base in the Netherlands and Headquarters U.S. Army Europe will cease operations in Bad Kreuznach, Germany, and return six facilities to host nation control.

More details are available online.

VISA use mandatory

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"These services were selected because all major airlines, hotels and car rental companies will accept the government travel card," said Mr. Weber.

"It may be difficult to use the card at some of the smaller merchant stores. For that reason, card use is not required for such expenses as restaurant meals and other miscellaneous incidental items," he said.

The government gets a rebate based on the amount of charges against the card. "That rebate is used by [the Government Services Agency] for manning the program," Mr. Weber said, "and the [Air Force portion] of the rebate is given back to each major command to be put in their travel budget."

Despite the convenience of using the government Visa card, its mandatory use has evoked some criticism.

This article is available in its entirety online.

CAN YOU DO THAT?

■ Voting information assists service members

By Staff Sgt. Cynthia Miller
Headquarters United States Air Force

WASHINGTON — As the first presidential primary season of the new millennium dawns, nearly every state of the union and its territories will hold a primary or caucus this year.

While service members are encouraged to take part in the electoral process by voting for the candidates of their choice, they should be aware that certain rules regarding political activities apply to them. Also, those members stationed away from their voting districts should take immediate steps to take advantage of absentee voting to make their voices heard.

According to the Air Force judge advocate general's office, restrictions on political activities by military members result from a fundamental principle that the civil government be controlled by civilian authorities. To avoid the appearance of military influence on the political process, some limitations have been placed on military participation in partisan politics.

"Active-duty military members need to remain neutral and detached from partisan political activities," said Jane Love, of the General Law Division, Office of the Judge Advocate General. "This does not mean that service members cannot participate in the democratic process at all, but only that they must be careful not to violate [Department of Defense] regulations that prohibit certain types of political activities."

The rules for political engagement can be found in DOD Directive 1344.10, *Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty*; and Air Force Instruction 51-902, *Political Activities by Members of the Air Force*.

Service members are encouraged to participate in the elective process to the extent permitted. For example, they are encouraged to vote for the candidates and issues of their choice. Every Air Force installation has a voting assistance officer to provide practical guidance on how to register to vote, how to vote by absentee ballot, and how to contact state voting officials.

This article is available in its entirety online.



YOU MAY:

- Register to vote and vote
- Attend political meetings (no uniform)
- Make contributions to political organizations but not individuals

YOU MAY NOT:

- Distribute partisan campaign material on base
- Attend partisan or nonpartisan political gatherings in uniform
- Use military or civilian positions to influence elections or solicit votes

The Federal Voting Assistance Program is on the Web at
<http://www.fvap.ncr.gov>



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